

Title: ASH COLLECTING FIRELOG TRAY

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CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

Not applicable

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR DEVELOPMENT

Not applicable

REFERENCE TO SEQUENCE LISTING, A TABLE, OR A COMPUTER PROGRAM LISTING

COMPACT DISK APPENDIX

Not applicable

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

This invention relates generally to fireplace accessories and, more specifically, to a tray for supporting a single manufactured log during combustion. The tray disclosed is capable of receiving and collecting ashes from a burning manufactured log and is easily movable to permit convenient disposal of the ashes.

Over the past number of years manufactured logs, hereinafter referred to as "firelogs", have become increasingly popular as a fuel source. In the past firelogs have mostly been used within fireplaces, however there is a growing demand for their use outside at beaches, camping sites, and on patios. Firelogs are usually composed of waxes, sawdust, wood chips, petroleum by-products, or any combination therein and normally burn for two to three hours,

depending on the log size and draft conditions. The length of firelogs typically varies from about 10 to 13 inches, while the weight varies from about 3 to 6 pounds. Each firelog is contained within a loose paper wrapper, which is easily ignited by a match or lighter to start burning of the log. Many people now prefer firelogs over wood logs due to their convenience, longer burn time and ease of lighting.

Typically, a fire grate is used to support a firelog while it is burned in the fireplace or elsewhere. A fire grate is a body, which supports burning members above the ground and allows for airflow underneath the burning members to promote combustion. Such fireplace grates typically contain a horizontal surface, upon which the fire is built, with the horizontal surface having a plurality of holes or elongated channels to allow for enhanced airflow underneath the burning members.

As a firelog burns on a typical fire grate, the ashes fall through the holes or elongated channels and onto the surface below where they accumulate such that the surface must be periodically cleaned. Cleaning ashes from any surface is a very messy, time consuming, and undesirable task.

In an effort to alleviate the problem of cleaning a fireplace floor or other surface, several fire grates have been devised with removable ash pans to catch the ashes as they fall from the burning material. Toth U.S. Pat. No. 5,010,874, Rhodes U.S. Pat. No. 5,067,476, Landman U.S. Pat. No. 5,513,625, and Taylor U.S. Pat. No. 6,006,744 all disclose examples of this type of fire grate and ash pan combination. These prior art devices consist of separate grate and ash pan sections. When the collected ashes are to be removed, the ash pan must be slid out from under the fire grate and then carried to a trash receptacle. Sliding the ash pan from underneath the grate is a potentially awkward procedure and could result in the spilling of ashes. Therefore it would be desirable to provide an invention in which the entire

apparatus, fire grate and ash pan, could be lifted from the fireplace or other surface and carried to a trash receptacle for disposal of the collected ash.

Gazaille U.S. Pat. No. 5,575,275 discloses a firelog burner tray for supporting a single burning firelog above ground. The burner tray includes a flat imperforate base plate and an elongated heat-reflector extending upwardly from the back edge of the base plate. This prior art device is capable of collecting most of the ashes produced from a burning firelog, however, due to its shape it would be difficult to transport the tray to a trash receptacle without spilling a considerable amount of the collected ash. This burner tray also does not allow for airflow on all sides of the burning firelog to promote combustion. Therefore, it would be desirable to provide a firelog tray which allows airflow on all sides of a burning log to promote combustion, while adequately containing any collected ash as the tray is being transported to a trash receptacle.

Chong U.S. Pat. No. 4,759,340 discloses a fire grate for supporting a single burning firelog. The fire grate includes an imperforate base plate, a rear backing plate, and end plates. This prior art device is also capable of collecting most of the ashes produced from a burning firelog, however due to the endplates on the sides of the grate, the ashes must be dumped from the front edge of the fire grate, where it is widest. Dumping the ash into a commonly sized trash receptacle could prove difficult in this configuration. Therefore, it would be desirable to provide a firelog tray that collects ashes and allows dumping from the sides, where the grate is narrowest. This would allow the ashes to be dumped easily into any commonly sized trash receptacle.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention specifically addresses and alleviates the above-mentioned deficiencies associated in the prior art. The present invention is a firelog tray for supporting firelogs during combustion and collecting the ashes that are produced, comprising:

- a disk shaped imperforate metal base curved circularly with the front and back edges bent to form handles;
- four legs supporting the curved metal base in a position whereby the back edge is approximately twice as high off the ground as the front edge;
- three parallel rows of metal pegs for supporting the firelog above the metal base during combustion.

The curved base is specifically sized to ensure all ashes from the burning firelog remain contained therein. The three parallel rows of metal pegs supporting the firelog allow for enhanced airflow on all sides of the burning firelog to promote combustion. After the firelog has completed burning, the entire tray apparatus can be easily lifted from the fireplace or elsewhere and carried to a trash receptacle for disposal of the collected ash. The curved base allows the ashes to be dumped from the sides, where the tray is narrowest. This allows the ashes to be easily dumped into any common trash receptacle.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEWS OF THE DRAWING

FIG. 1 is a perspective view of the firelog tray, shown supporting an unlit firelog.

FIG. 2 is a front view of the firelog tray, shown supporting an unlit firelog.

FIG. 3 is a side view of the firelog tray, shown supporting an unlit firelog.

FIG. 4 is a top view of the firelog tray.

FIG. 5 is a side view of the firelog tray, shown supporting a burning firelog and collecting the ashes produced.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The detailed description set forth below in connection with the appended drawings is intended as a description of the presently preferred embodiment of the invention, and is not intended to represent the only form in which the present invention may be constructed or utilized.

Referring to FIGS. 1-5, the firelog tray is generally designated by the numeral 1. The base 2 is a disk shaped imperforate metal sheet, approximately 20 inches in diameter, curved circularly as suggested in FIGS. 3 and 5. The base 2 is preferably constructed of a metal suitable to withstand the heat of an ordinary fire, such as steel or cast iron, however other metals may also be used. The front and back edges of the base 2 are bent to form handles 3-4, which facilitate the handling of the firelog tray 1.

Four metal legs 5-8 are riveted to the base 2. The legs 5-8 support the firelog tray 1 above the ground in a position whereby the back handle 4 is approximately twice as high from the ground as the front handle 3 as illustrated in FIGS. 3 and 5.

Three parallel rows of metal pegs 9-11 are riveted to the base 2 as shown in FIGS. 3, 4, and 5. The parallel rows of metal pegs 9-11 run longitudinally along the base 2 and are centered between the side edges 12 and 13. The middle row of metal pegs 9 consists of five metal pegs, each approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long, spaced 3 inches apart and is located at the lowest point of the base 2 as suggested in FIG. 3. The two outside rows of metal pegs 10 and 11 each consist of four metal pegs, approximately $\frac{3}{4}$ inch long, spaced three inches apart and are located $1\frac{1}{2}$ inches from the middle row of metal pegs 9 as illustrated in FIGS. 3, 4, and 5.

When in use the present invention functions in the following manner:
A firelog 14 is placed longitudinally on the three parallel rows of metal pegs 9-11 as shown in FIGS. 1-3. The firelog 14 is then lighted by conventional means and allowed to burn as

suggested in FIG.5. The three parallel rows of metal pegs **9-11** support the burning firelog **14** above the base **2** and allow for airflow to all sides of the burning firelog **14**. Allowing airflow to all sides of the firelog **14** helps to promote combustion and even burning.

As the firelog **14** burns, the produced ashes **15** are collected on the base **2** as illustrated in FIG. 5. After the firelog **14** has completed burning, the firelog tray **1** is lifted from the fireplace or elsewhere by the handles **3** and **4** and carried to a trash receptacle. The firelog tray **1** is then tilted longitudinally, allowing the ashes **15** to be dumped in the trash receptacle from either side edge **12** or **13** where the base **2** is narrowest.

It is understood that the fireplace tray described herein and shown in the drawings represents only a presently preferred embodiment of the invention. Various modifications and additions may be made to such embodiment without departing from the spirit and scope of the invention. For example the size of various components may be varied considerably without detracting from the firelog tray's ability to support burning firelogs and collect the ashes produced.